

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 02571 311103Z
ACTION EUR-12

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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R 311013Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0780
INFO USMISSION NATO
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
DIA WASHDC
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA
COMUSFORAZ LAJES FLD AZORES
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS BEL
TAC LANGLEY VA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, MARR, PO
SUBJECT: AZORES BASE NEGOTIATIONS

SUMMARY: IQBAL AHMED, FOREIGN NEWS EDITOR OF LEADING DAILY
"DIARIO DE NOTICIAS" NOW IN STATES ON USIA DEFENSE/SECURITY
TOUR, HAD FRONT PAGE STORY MARCH 30 SAYING LAJES NEGOTIATIONS
WOULD START SOON. ARTICLE DESCRIBED TACTICAL AIR COMMAND
BRIEFING IN WHICH AZORES BASE WAS DESCRIBED AS AN ABSOLUTE
PRIORITY FROM THE US MILITARY POINT OF VIEW. ARTICLE SUGGESTS
THAT SOARES, DURING FORTHCOMING VISIT TO WASHINGTON, WILL CARRY
GOVERNMENT'S REPLY ON BEGINNING BASE NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. ARTICLE ON LAJES BASE NEGOTIATIONS: IN A FRONT PAGE
ARTICLE HEADLINED "LAJES NEGOTIATIONS WILL BEGIN SOON,"
IQBAL AHMED, FOREIGN NEWS EDITOR OF PRO-GOVERNMENT "DIARIO
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DE NOTICIAS" NOW ON A USIA SPONSORED DEFENSE/SECURITY TOUR
IN THE US, DISCUSSED AZORES BASE NEGOTIATIONS. IN A
STORY APPEARING MAR 30 DATED LANGLEY AIR FORCE
BASE, AHMED SAID THAT ACCORDING TO HIGHLY PLACED SOURCES IN
THE DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND DEFENSE THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT
WAS WAITING FOR A REPLY FROM LISBON IN ORDER TO START
DISCUSSIONS ON LAJES BASE. AHMED SAID THE SAME SOURCES

CATEGORICALLY DENIED THAT THE DELAY IN BEGINNING CONVERSATIONS WAS DUE TO SEPARATIST TENDENCIES IN THE AZORES.

2. STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE: AHMED WENT ON TO STATE THAT THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF LAJES FOR THE UNITED STATES WAS UNDERLINED MAR 29 BY ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR OPERATIONS OF THE TACTICAL AIR COMMAND GEN C.A. GABRIEL, WHO CLASSIFIED THE AZORES BASE AS AN "ABSOLUTE PRIORITY" FROM THE AMERICAN MILITARY POINT OF VIEW. AHMED COMMENTED THAT THIS STATEMENT GAINED A NEW DIMENSION IN VIEW OF A PREVIOUS BRIEFING AT LANGLEY AFB IN WHICH SEVERAL SPEAKERS HAD SPOKEN OF THE THREAT OF BLITZKRIEG AGAINST EUROPE BY THE SOVIET UNION AND THE WARSAW PACT.

3. SOARES'S TRIP AND BASE NEGOTIATIONS: AHMED ENDED HIS ARTICLE BY NOTING "THAT IN DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES IN WASHINGTON, IT IS BELIEVED THAT PRIME MINISTER SOARES HIMSELF WILL BE THE BEARER OF THE AWAITED RESPONSE ON LAJES BASE NEGOTIATIONS DURING THE FORTHCOMING VISIT IN WHICH HE WILL MEET PRESIDENT CARTER. SOARES, IN ADDITION TO THE RESPONSE ON LAJES, WILL CARRY WITH HIM THE IMAGE OF A DEMOCRATIC PORTUGAL AND THE HOPE FOR ITS FUTURE. AND THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IS VITALLY INTERESTED IN BOTH. THAT IS WHY THERE IS A GENERAL BELIEF IN WASHINGTON THAT THE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN SOARES AND PRESIDENT CARTER WILL BE SUCCESSFUL AND MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS."

4. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS STUDY ON AZORES BASE: THE MAR 29 EDITION OF PRO-SOCIALIST "A LUTA" CARRIED A SMALL ARTICLE ENTITLED "THE UNITED STATES MIGHT NOT HAVE THE SAME FACILITIES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN THE AZORES." THE ARTICLE WENT ON TO SAY THAT A STUDY BY THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CONCLUDED THAT SOME BASES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN POSSIBLY COST MORE THAN THEIR VALUE. STUDY SUGGESTED THAT METHODS FOR CONDUCTING OPERATIONS OUTSIDE NATO AREA WITHOUT DEPENDING ON THOSE INSTALLATIONS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED. THE STUDY ALLEGEDLY NOTED THAT GREECE, TURKEY, SPAIN, AND ITALY REFUSED USE OF THEIR NATO AIR BASES FOR RESUPPLYING ISRAEL DURING THE 1973 WAR, AND FORESAW THAT PORTUGAL WOULD ADOPT, FORMALLY, THE SAME POSITION. ARTICLE CLOSED BY POINTING OUT THAT US USED AZORES FACILITY TO REFUEL AIRCRAFT HEADED FOR ISRAEL IN THE 1973 ARAB-ISRAELI WAR.

5. COMMENT: IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE FULL TEXT OF COMMENTS ON LAJES MADE DURING TAC BRIEFING.
CARLUCCI

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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